RESEARCH OF A SOCIONOMY SPECIALISTS' SOCIAL ACTIVITY IN THE SYSTEM OF MODERN HUMANITARIAN KNOWLEDGE

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Abstract: The paper examines the issue of future specialists' social activity in the light of contemporary challenges when the role of socionomic professions is growing. The author determines the factors influencing the formation and development of the individual social activity in broad contexts of changes which are taking place in the social environment; also the author determines the factors influencing a variety of activities where the interests of each person and the interests of social development are closely intertwined. The research identifies and substantiates methodological tools demonstrating how to increase the effectiveness of the efforts undertaken by today's domestic pedagogical education to help the individual solve urgent social problems of the socionomic sphere by improving the system of professional education and specialists' social training in all types of learning and educational processes.

Keywords: personal formation, socionomy specialists, social activity, social action, social actor, technologization of educational processes, higher education, educational system.

1 Introduction

The renewal of democratic public space in today's developed communities demonstrates knowledge sharing that supports such values of the democratic society as openness, trust, exchange and cooperation - "it is a source of autonomy and a spirit of initiative, it appeals to the active participation of everyone in the life of society" (10). The social activity of the individual is seen as a factor of humanitarian security in knowledge societies, since knowledge societies are societies whose source of development is their own diversity and their own capacities; it is the society where updated higher education systems should contribute not only to the creation, dissemination and application of knowledge, but also to the formation of civic position (10). The social demand for the development of students' social activity is enshrined in a number of international documents. According to Article 2 of the World Declaration on Higher Education for the Twenty-First Century: Vision and Action, at the recent stage of social development the tasks and functions of higher education are to help identify and solve problems affecting the well-being of communities. The document also sets a clear task: higher education institutions, their staff and students should: be able to use their intellectual potential and their moral authority to protect and actively disseminate universally recognized values, including peace, justice, freedom, equality and solidarity proclaimed in the UNESCO Statute 4. According to the Memorandum on Lifelong Learning of the European Union, social skills such as self-confidence, responsibility for one's own destiny, ability to take risks are also becoming more important in today's world. (12)

At the same time, in the modern world the professionalization of each individual becomes a form of inclusion in the socioeconomic processes, a means of development, self-realization and a source of livelihood. For society the professionalization of its members is, first and foremost, a source of cultural and material wealth, without which social development is impossible. In the light of today's challenges, the role of socionomic professions – a variety of activities where the interests of each person and the interests of social development are closely intertwined – is growing. It significantly enhances the role of socionomy specialists and indicates the need to improve the system of professional education for their social training in all types of learning and education and humanities is to encourage the individual to take part in the solution of urgent social problems.

2 Research results and discussions

2.1 Research on the social activity of the individual in philosophical and educational dimension

Today's professional education is facing an urgent problem how to combine the processes of professionalization and socialization, the humanitarian content of curricula for socionomy specialists and the technologization of educational processes. Therefore, Ukrainian pedagogy and education have to update the educational content, introduce innovative forms, methods and person-oriented educational technologies that will ensure the achievement of qualitative results in the formation of man by humanistic values, meaningful orientations, spiritual growth, ability for self-improvement, development of personal potential and self-realization. (17) Since modern pedagogical methodology goes beyond the traditional scientific knowledge and embraces the entire socio-cultural world with its multiple problems, multidisciplinary nature, specific historical time and space, experts note certain difficulties connected with taking into account the individual differences in the development of social activity skills when the competence approach is used in the system of modern professional education. This problem is particularly important with regard to socionomy specialists' training when lack of knowledge and practical skills often have a situational and extremely negative impact on the results of professional activity. In the context of the above, it is advisable to analyze the notions of social activity in the scientific environment.

In the philosophical encyclopedic dictionary, "activity" (from Latin activus - effective, practical) is interpreted as one of the characteristic features of the lifestyle of the social actor (personality, social group, historical community, society as a whole), and this activity reflects the measure (level) of his/her abilities, knowledge, skills, aspirations, concentration of volitional, creative efforts to realize urgent needs, interests, goals, and ideals. The activity is carried out in individual, group, collective, mass, labour, political, organizational, managerial, cultural, leisure and other life forms of society. As an antipode of social passivity, it is manifested in the activities of political and public organizations, movements, during the implementation of social initiatives, etc. Due to its heterogeneity, social activity can be used by different social forces and lead to both positive and negative consequences. As a scientific category, it is used in various fields of humanitarian cognition to study the dynamics of historical events, social problems of the individual and society, group behaviour, the political life of society. (1)

A similar definition is given in the Encyclopedia of Modern Ukraine, according to which "social activity" is a characteristic of the lifestyle of the social actor (individual, group) which consciously directs his/her activity and behaviour towards the change of the social environment, conditions, institutions according to the needs, interests, goals, ideals, or, on the contrary, towards preservation of the existing state of things, putting a brake on changes and development; it means identifying social initiatives, participating in the solution of relevant social problems, interaction with other social actors. "Social activity" is a factor which helps to realize the social actor's activity potential, his/her culture, skills, knowledge, needs, interests, aspirations, social activity. Since there are diverse forms of individual, group, mass kinds of activity and behaviour among people, "social activity" is characterized by multiple specific manifestations. The types of social activity include professional-labour, civil-political, moral, managerial, leisure, verbal ones. Procedurally, social activity is characterized as creative, productive, or non-creative, reproductive while acquiring various social orientations and meanings.

According to a number of other sources, within the philosophical approach social activity is studied in social interaction – as "the process where social objects make a direct or indirect influence on each other, which is determined by and manifested in social interaction, and where interacting parties are connected by cyclic causal dependence. The emergence and development of social activity is associated with the mutual participation of interacting

objects in a complex, mobile network of social relations with a variety of ways to implement common activities and social solidarity". (26)

In the field of philosophy, modern Ukrainian researchers emphasize the spiritual component of the social activity of the individual. They believe it is the ability to assert his/her vital autonomy and willingness in order to defend his/her ideological positions whose core is the desire for justice which should dominate in the process of spiritual and moral upbringing, and which means overcoming egoism. The preconditions of social activity are such personal qualities as group identity and harmony, reasonable group conformism, solidarity and care. (3) The purpose of upbringing is generally considered to be the formation of personality according to an existing model that is correlated with a certain historical period of society development. Its purpose is a real, socially sustainable personality, capable for a significant contribution to social development in the new socio-economic conditions. Among the structural components of the social activity of the individual, researchers most often point out determination, perseverance, activity, curiosity, independence, sociability, collectivism, mutual assistance, perception of something new, creativity and responsibility. The integrative, key characteristics of a socially active individual are initiative and responsibility.

One of the most prominent features of our time is the increased activity of youth in all spheres of social life. However, the expansion of rights and freedoms is organically linked to the boost of everybody's responsibility towards society and the observance of civic duty. (30) S. Poleiev in his work "Society of knowledge as an anthropological situation" says that in developed economies, due to the considerable decrease of the share of population engaged in the field of production and the gradual predominance of the employed in the non-production sphere - service, education, management, etc. - life situations are mostly turning into cognitive situations in the modern world. In the author's opinion, this process is closely related to changes in the structure and nature of human labour. (23) Philosophical research also points to significant transformations in the nature and forms "knowledge" exists in the era of informatization when "the main cultural quality of the individual is mobility..., ... and the way to constitute the mobility is his/her involvement in information networks. It puts forward the fundamental requirement for the modern educational system to be transformed, which means that cultural, social, professional, psychological mobility is transformed into the main purpose of higher education and, therefore, becomes the main achievement of the university graduate. In turn, a conflict arises between the fundamental and current mission of university". (23) Since the main purpose of education is the socialization of the individual, and the task of education is the theoretical and practical realization of socialization goals, there is also an instrumental presentation (formation) of a specialist's social activity through the set of social norms and standards as a means of retaining future members of community within this community's influence, within its boundaries. (2) On the one hand, the latter raises the problem of an inevitable restriction of this process, which is permissible for the certain forms of functioning and, on the other hand, it has quite successful goals to achieve. Since it is necessary to create such an atmosphere in pedagogy which helps realize its functions, and which could motivate the educational process by internal motives to serve the society or oneself, in the context of the social activity development it is necessary to make a turn: to reduce external coercion and to strengthen the conviction of the people who study. (2) At the same time, it is important that recognition of spiritual relations as important components of the social structure of society is simultaneously the recognition of knowledge about these relations in the structure of social knowledge and cognition. (27)

Therefore, at the level of methodological understanding of the social activity development, the position of the social actor becomes important while the social reality itself is implicitly understood as a result of objectifications of the social actor's consciousness. At the level of methodological analysis the

research process is directed at the production of objectified knowledge, while at the level of methodological understanding the emphasis shifts from the process of obtaining knowledge to its use. (27) Therefore, quite important is A. Furman's opinion that modern pedagogical methodology should go beyond the limits of purely scientific knowledge, embracing the whole socio-cultural world with its multiple problems, abundance of subjects, in certain historical time and space, because it means that "... it [pedagogical methodology] is concerned about the way people act. On the one hand, they act according to the laws of sociality (compliance with form), on the other - according to the cultural laws or content". Hence, at the reflective level it is advisable to involve certain approaches in the social activity of future specialists. These approaches should take into account the boundary principles of different levels of methodological analysis - awareness of social activity as an action, its purpose and tasks, forms and means, methods of implementation and results; awareness of social activity as the reproduction (learning) of a particular activity together with the transmission of cultural norms; optimization or rationalization of activity, how it can be best implemented under certain conditions and in the shortest possible time; awareness of social activity as creation of new activities which are seen as reality (27).

With regard to the socio-economic approach, which, in our opinion, requires more detailed consideration while studying the social activity of socionomy specialists, we point out that in most research works on socio-economics the social activity of the specialist is treated as a condition and property of the personality, associated with the ability of the individual to provide personal financial well-being with available resources, abilities, initiative in decision-making, creative activity. In the context of the economic approach, it is emphasized that the social activity of the individual depends on both external (development of production, organization of labour activity, support of competition, etc.), and internal conditions (desire to meet personal needs, mobility, creative incomes, etc.).

2.2 The social activity of the individual in the context of socio-psychological and sociological approaches

Within the socio-psychological approach (K. Albukhanova, A. Bandura, A. Maslow, etc.), the social activity of the individual is interpreted as a property of the individual psyche, a feature of its psychological traits (volitional qualities, giftedness, intellectual abilities, certain behavioral patterns, etc.). In the context of the psychological approach, the factors of the social activity of the individual are seen as volitional qualities and an individual talent. Special attention is given to the specificity of the social activity of the individual through the analysis of the possibility for him/her to adapt successfully to environmental conditions, to regulate certain forms of behaviour, to find the meaning of life, to develop creative skills, etc.

The activity aspects of the socio-psychological approach are believed to be very important for our research. They are defined "Activity (characteristics in V. Khaikin's work and development" where the author states that social activity is considered, first of all, as "the personal need to change or maintain the basics of human life in accordance with his/her worldview or value orientations", that is, activity is seen as a special property of the person who is the actor. This activity ensures the functioning of the individual in the social world and his/her personal development, since the activity in its broadest sense detects the subject, purpose, motive; it suggests the possibility of project-making, implements various forms of individual interaction, ensuring their development, self-improvement and creation of the proper environment; it integrates the human features of activity and realizes the human activity itself. (28)

The process of defining the parameters of the specialist (development of the specialist's psychological models) in different areas of life and the process of tracking the major changes which are recorded by these parameters during the professional growth allowed us to understand the importance of the self-development mechanism in the formation of personality, since the involution of personal self-development can lead to deformation and degradation of personality. The integral characteristic of the actual moment of the personal selfdevelopment is most often seen as the results of socio-cultural and professional activities and as the level of competence conformity to personal requirements which are made towards the sphere of activity. However, even in this case the person is rated as a "function" and it is not taken into account that the peak of the personal self-development does not necessarily coincide with the peak of the personal activity manifestations.

In our case, it is social activity that becomes a means of gaining social competences, and nearly all researchers see eye to eye on the following: though it is impossible to achieve a high level of social competence without the development of special abilities (which are adequate to specific activity in the form and content), without knowledge and skills, but the most important condition to achieve the necessary level of competence is also the development of general abilities, universal human values, and, above all, the moral education of personality. (6)

In turn, some integrated life narratives, including social activity, can be a source of information for establishing personal identity, understanding your own place in the world and contributing your own activity into it. (35) However, the nature of the relationship between the personal characteristics and criteria of successful activity continues to be the focus of research, since the development of a competent personality is only possible if professionalism and personal development are mutually developed.

Therefore, in our opinion, the ideas of subjective effectiveness and confidence in subjective effectiveness (31, 36) are central to the social-cognitive approach to the analysis of personality in the research on social activity. Thus, social competence as a psychological and personal formation can be characterized not so much by knowledge, skills, professionally significant qualities, but by the ability and to some extent the art of setting and solving life tasks (including professional ones), by special understanding of the reality in general or certain (also difficult) situations in the activity. Both culture and characteristics of social environment influence the adaptive mechanisms and integrated life narratives of personality. Consequently, the characteristics of personality adaptation in the professional environment relate to the so-called contextualized goals, values, coping strategies and patterns of behaviour associated with interaction with other people.

Within the sociological approach (P. Bourdieu, M. Weber, A. Giddens, I. Hoffman, T. Parsons, J. Habermas, M. Horkheimer, etc.), social activity is interpreted as a specific type of activity of the individual, oriented to the individual participation in the solution of current social problems. In the context of our work, some sociological approaches to human activity are of considerable interest, in particular J. Habermas' theory of communicative action, A. Giddens' theory of structuration, and P. Bourdieu's constructivist structuralism. The concept of J. Habermas is based on the assumption that society and all relations in society form two components - the purposeful rational action and communicative action. The purposeful rational action ensures the basic functions and reproduction of society; it incorporates formal norms, rules, regulations. The main task of this component is to ensure the well-being and security of individuals. According to the concept, in contrast to the pragmatic purposeful rational, there is the communicative action that determines the transfer of knowledge, socialization of personality, interaction between people, and selfdevelopment of the individual.

The development of civilization causes the change of the purposeful rational action (system) to the communicative action (living world). However, according to J. Habermas, although human activity is conditioned by the ability to perform the communicative action, in the modern world the activity of the individual is being constantly reduced due to the fact that the living world is dominated by the standards and norms of the system.

The scrutiny of the evolution of the sociological approaches, which were put forward by different scientific schools, the theoretical directions and research works by V. Pylypenko and O. Honcharuk stress on the necessity to do the research by branch social sciences. Firstly, it is connected with radical changes in the modern reality and with the necessity to clarify the factors helping to increase the adaptive possibilities of members of the professional communities at certain stages of social development. (20) According to A. Ruchka, another important factor is the analysis of social competence as a resource of life activity at the individual-personal level of human development, covering the personal field of formation and development of the social subjectivity of the individual, in particular the professional environment and the specific educational institution where professional education is received. (24)

The findings of thorough sociological surveys which are studying innovative dimensions of Ukraine's social development make it possible to consider the specialist's social competence as a well-established value orientation of modern society members, which includes different levels and forms of interaction between the social and individual sides in personality. The results of O. Zlobina's work where she studied personality as an actor of social changes through the prism of "social subjectivity" allow us to further classify the properties of the actor (individual, group) which are manifested in his/her activity". (9) Since, according to this approach, a person becomes an active doer only when he/she starts to influence the situation and transform it in a certain way, so the realization of the individual active position is determined by the presence of adequate mechanisms for its social formation.

Recent sociological research state a number of contradictions in the system of national education which significantly worsen its functioning as an important social institution. I. Nechytailo defines this contradiction as inconsistency of the education results with the expectations of the individual, state, society. (19) Since education is studied on a large scale – as a social institution, as a process of social interaction, as a result of the future specialist's activity, as well as of specific social communities and society as a whole, all educational goals are narrowed down to three basic approaches:

- 1. The first approach emphasizes the procedural nature of education; its purpose is to translate knowledge and experience from generation to generation.
- 2. From the point of view of the second approach, the purpose of education is not in the process itself, but in its result which is the formation of a complete personality that acts for the benefit of society.
- 3. Within the third approach, the purpose of education is personality which is self-sufficient, comprehensively developed, prepared for the reproductive activity, preservation, development and multiplication of the material and spiritual culture of society.

The third approach, overcoming the limitations of the first one (the unspecified purpose) and the second one (domination of the social over the personal), combines the two vectors and emphasizes the need for the individual not only to adapt to existing social realities, but also to master the means of their transformation while being an active doer and the main conductor of social change. Also, this approach lays great stress on the formation of such personality, and rightly affirms the interconnection between the educational outcomes and the peculiarities of the educational processes as components of the socialization process.

Therefore, it is methodologically justified that researchers want to specify the effects of systems (subsystems of the educational environment) on the formation of personality in several subject fields in order to consider how the functions of the educational environment are related to goal setting. The sociological position that suggests integrating the whole set of educational functions into several ones seems to be constructive. Its parameters of goal setting are clearly defined and of the greatest importance for the processes of life support, reproduction and constructive social change:

- The function of culture creation;
- The function of social structure reproduction;
- The function of ensuring the principle of social justice in the creation of culture and social structure. (19)

2.3 The social activity of the future socionomy specialists: principles and goal setting

Theoretical and methodological approaches of modern pedagogical science, which study the social activity of socionomy specialists and which are based on the above and many other philosophical, social-psychological, sociological and pedagogical concepts, consider the social activity as specific activity, determined by the process of upbringing, creation of conditions for self-development, successful mastering of social norms, values, etc. The components of social activity include individual characteristics and external conditions of the individual (e.g., family well-being, educational institution, social environment, influence of the teacher, etc.).

The overwhelming majority of the research on theoretical and methodological foundations that deal with pedagogical aspects of the development and formation of social activity are based on the definition of the social activity phenomenon as an "active link between human and social environment which, within the pedagogical system, appears as a form providing social growth of its actors (students) according to the social responsibilities and experience that the student acquires in the process of receiving higher professional education". (13) During the analysis of the content, structure and functions of the social activity that is characteristic of the student environment at HEIs, it was found out that the development of self-organization and social subjectivity, which focuses on the student's creating the image of the desired professional future while studying at HEI, requires forecasting actual changes, strategic planning and involvement of the actor into the transformation of himself/herself and the environment according to the following pedagogical principles:

- The principle of anticipatory reflection and transformative orientation (which requires prediction of actual change, strategic planning and inclusion of the actor in the transformation of oneself and environment);
- The principle of autonomy (which indicates the need to give the actors of the educational process the opportunity, regardless of the existing business relations and other actors; to develop their autonomous structure of activity and put it into practice;
- The principle of mutual enrichment in cooperation (which means that development of university students' social activity in the process of integration between formal and non-formal education should be built on the basis of mutual respect for the interests of all actors, harmonization of their priorities and exchange of contributions between them);
- The principle of co-evolution (which means compatibility, consistency, interdependence of changes in the student's social activity in accordance with the actual tasks of personal, social and professional development, as well as changes in the environment, since the student is active while interacting with it;
- The principle of integration of personal and social priorities (which means that the development of the student's social activity must meet the requirements, norms, relationships, priorities of the society and be guided by value, uniqueness of personality; it must promote rapprochement, convergence of personal and social priorities both in the environment and in the minds of its actors);

- The principle of constructive subjectivity (which means that in the educational environment of a higher education institution, a student and a teacher are actors who are given the freedom of choice, self-determination, self-regulation, self-organization);
- The principle of binary cyclicity (which makes sure that the development of the student's social activity and his/her pedagogical support are realized as a change of cycles);
- The principle of productivity growth (this approach means that with each new cycle of the social activity development, one must strive for increasing productivity in the interaction among the actors of the educational environment);
- The principle of feedback (which demands the regular study of the results demonstrating the development of students' social activity, the opinions of the actors of the educational process in the process of monitoring). (29)

Based on the results of the above-mentioned theoretical and methodological foundations and approaches, and summarizing the results of our research on the social activity of future socionomy specialists, it should be noted that social activity differs from other types of activity:

- By the environment of manifestation and development;
- By the process it determines and resulting from which it can develop – social interaction which represents the system of social relations of the individual with the environment in the form of activity, cognition, communication;
- By the nature of the activity where the socially significant social problems are addressed, as well as the transformation of the actor, social environment and oneself;
- By a focus on reconciling personal and social interests.

At this, the essential characteristics of the social activity are: self-determination (the source of social activity, the needs of the individual, the internal conscious urge conditioned by the "desired future" and meaningful for the individual); involvement in social interaction (social activity is the result of the individual's awareness of the relationship with society and his/her ways of interaction with it. All this gives a possibility to fulfill the potential of the individual while purposefully transforming himself/herself and the environment; social activity manifests itself in the form of productive activity, communication, cognition); pro-social orientation of activity development for the benefit of society and the individual while following cultural values, social norms, laws and moral ideals.

These characteristics allow us to consider the social activity of the individual as a state and as an integrative property of the person (social group) that is determined by the interaction with the social environment in the process of cognition and transformation of oneself and society in accordance with the tasks of social development and personal self-development. In addition to these characteristics, essential in the manifestation of social activity (not relating to previous types of activity) is its orientation. The choice of the social activity orientation made by the actor is determined by his/her awareness of social phenomena and their interconnection, the dominant values in the society, and by understanding their social significance. It is the pro-social orientation of human activity that is the transformation of the environment for the benefit of society and the individual, which is the main essential characteristic of social activity. Social activity is manifested in the voluntary and conscious desire of the individual to act, to realize oneself for the benefit of society, to accept social tasks as one's own and to be involved in their solution.

If the psychological and pedagogical aspects of the personality formation and development are related to his/her own efforts and ways of self-determination and self-realization, then the substantive part of the social demand for the desired orientation of the future specialist's social activity is defined in normative acts. Therefore, at this stage of research, we should take into account the need to "translate" general universal concepts into a local framework of understanding, and to consider the further multidisciplinary developments undertaken in the context of a competence approach to the research.

The Future Work Skills 2020 research states that leading positions in the ranking of the most important skills for achieving success in professional activity in the near future are unconditionally attributed to the socialization of the individual and the level of his/her individual social consciousness (in fact, social competences and social activity), namely:

- Understanding the meaning of activity as a skill critical to decision-making;
- Developing social intelligence as a factor of competitive advantage and building successful cooperation and professional relationships with others;
- Ability to think outside the box and rules, adaptive thinking as a means of "situational adaptability";
- Ability to respond to unique and unexpected circumstances;
- Development of intercultural competence as an adaptive factor in the context of globalization and the driving force of innovations. (32)

Among the five key competences adopted by the Council of Europe, the social competence holds one of the leading positions along with intercultural, multimedia, communication and self-development competences. (33, 34) Higher education standard, which is based on the Law of Ukraine of 01.07.2014 No 1556 VII "On Higher Education", (7) Law of Ukraine of 05.09.2017 "On Education", (8) a number of resolutions of the Cabinet of Ministers, (21, 22) and other regulations establishes professional requirements for the level of knowledge in order to develop the ability to apply knowledge in the professional environment.

3 Conclusions

According to the results of the research, we found out that social activity as a state is a qualitative characteristic demonstrating the interaction of the actor with the social environment at a particular time. As an integrative characteristic, social activity demonstrates integrity, originality and connections between the properties of a particular actor which determine its manifestation. At this, the state and the properties are interrelated: the state of social activity is conditioned by internal properties and external environment; by contrast only certain properties of social activity are actualized at a certain moment while the others make up its potential. (29)

According to the educational standards of professional competences, the result of the professional training of the modern student – the future socionomy specialist is not only a high level of knowledge and practical skills, but also the ability to independently solve problems, to take an active part in building a new Ukrainian society while achieving a successful self-fulfillment in social life. According to the Competencey Classification in the National Qualifications Framework (NQF), students should gain the mandatory knowledge competences, practical skills, general, social and communication competences; competences defined by the current standard as "Autonomy and Responsibility".

According to the normative documents, there are the compulsory practical skills for HEIs students that are formulated for bachelors who are studying in specialty 231 "Social work" and that are defined by current standard, (14) for those in specialty 012 "Preschool education" by current standard. (16) There are competences which a HEI graduate must gain in the field of preschool education for the development, education and upbringing of early preschoolers, as well as in specialty 053 "Psychology" approved by current Standard. (15) However, a large majority of these competences belong to the characteristics that a student cannot gain while remaining the inactive actor in the educational process.

In this regard, one of the most important tasks of the modern higher education institution is the development of the student's social activity. Since the effective implementation of the socioprofessional functions and roles of the future specialist depends on the social activity, it is pedagogically important to determine the conditions which will help to make the integration of the structural components of the future socionomy specialist's social activity the most effective during the period of receiving education. Thus, the next stage of our research is an enlargement of the interdisciplinary study of the current standards of social competences for future socionomy specialists. This study will let us identify the effective qualitative and quantitative parameters in order to measure and assess the level of the social activity development within the professional groups under study.

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